Deputy Prime Minister's statement regarding Chinese-Occupied-Kashmir

† 288. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the statement of the Deputy Prime Minister to the effect that "China Ke Kabje Wala Kashmir Hamara Hai" published in various newspapers on the 20th September, 2002; and

(b) if so, the details of the steps Government have taken to take back China-Occupied-Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) and (b) The Government of India have never recognised the so-called Sino-Pakistan Boundary Agreement of 1963. Through a note verbal issued on March 2,1963, the Government have clarified that any such illegal arrangement involving Indian territory between parties that have no legal or constitutional *locus standi* is invalid and unacceptable.

China continues to be in illegal occupation of approximately 38,000 sq. kms in the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir. In addition, under the so-called Sino-Pakistan Boundary Agreement of 1963, Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 sq. kms of Indian territory in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir to China. China also illegally claims approximately 90,000 sq. kms of Indian territory in the Eastern Sector of the India-China boundary in Arunachal Pradesh.

India and China seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question through peaceful consultations. We signed an Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas in 1993 and a second agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field along the line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas in 1996. These two Agreements provide an institutional framework for the maintenance of peace and tranquility in the border areas.

Government remains vigilant and takes all necessary and appropriate measures to safeguard the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of India.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.